

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
November 1st and 2nd, 2005
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

The meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority was called to order on November 1st at 3:00 p.m. at Sacramento Capitol Building, Senate Hearing Room 2040.

Members Present: Fran Florez, Chair
Marc Adelman, Vice Chair
Rod Diridon, Sr.
Lynn Schenk
T.J. Stapleton

Opening Comments

Chair Florez welcomed the audience for today's meeting. Chair Florez announced that for the public comment on the EIR/EIS, any persons planning to speak need to submit their names on the forms provided. Depending on the number of speakers, there may be a time limit established to allow everyone an opportunity to speak.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for the following Authority Meetings:

Chair Florez presented the minutes from the September 28, 2005 meeting for approval. Member Stapleton moved to approve the minutes, Member Schenk seconded, which carried 5-0.

Authority Members' Meetings for Compensation

Chair Florez presented the list of meetings for compensation for approval. Member Stapleton moved to approve the list of meetings for compensation, Member Diridon seconded, which carried 5-0.

Selection of Monthly Meeting Dates for 2006

Chair Florez presented the list of meeting dates for 2006 for approval. Member Stapleton moved to approve the list of meeting dates, Member Adelman seconded, which carried 5-0.

Members Reports

Member Diridon reported on the completed merger between the National High-Speed Ground Transportation Association and the American Public Transit Association. Member Diridon reported on the new by-laws and charter developed for the High-Speed & Intercity Rail Committee that have been approved in concept by APTA. Member Diridon reported that when funds are available there will be development of a high-speed rail brochure. The brochure will describe the importance of intercity high-speed rail for the United States.

Member Diridon reported that he will be representing the United States High-Speed Ground Transportation Association in Milan, Italy next week. Member Diridon reported that he will develop a report on what is needed to deliver high-speed rail to the United States.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Morshed reported that there is little to report from the Legislature due to the Legislature's recess. Executive Director Morshed reported earlier that the Senate Transportation Committee was scheduling hearings on SB1024 throughout the state and one of the hearings will be specific to high-speed rail. Currently, no hearing dates have been selected.

Executive Director Morshed reported that Authority Staff and Attorney General's Office Staff have been busy over the last few months responding to comments and preparing the documents that are available at this meeting.

Executive Director Morshed reported that he spent last week in Madrid as a guest of the Spanish Government. The Spanish Government hosted a conference on high-speed rail and invited representatives throughout the world who have high-speed rail programs to come and discuss projects and experiences. Executive Director Morshed reported that the conference had representatives from countries that have high-speed rail systems in operation and countries actively planning a high-speed rail system. Some of the countries developing high-speed rail programs are Poland, Russia, Romania, Turkey, Bosnia, Morocco and Algeria. The countries developing high-speed rail systems have developed more extensive and detailed programs than any programs being developed in the United States.

Public Comment

James Birkelund, Natural Resources Defense Council

Mr. Birkelund expressed support for the overall concept of high-speed rail in California, however, Mr. Birkelund noted that it would be premature to select any corridor alignments or station locations at the program level EIR/EIS due to insufficient analysis of environmental impacts.

Bob Link, Mayor of Visalia

Mayor Link congratulated the Authority for reaching the completion of the program level EIR/EIS. Mayor Link expressed gratitude on behalf of the City of Visalia and other South County Cities for the opportunity to voice concerns and discuss issues regarding the alignment between Fresno to Bakersfield with the Authority staff.

Hal Cooper Jr.

Mr. Cooper expressed praise of the Final EIR/EIS document and the comprehensive analysis of the entire high-speed project. Mr. Cooper suggested that the Authority consider a proposal for a second alignment between Bakersfield and Los Angeles. The second alignment would tunnel through the Grapevine; carry freight and passenger cars; and would be constructed with private funds.

Laura Biery, City of Palmdale

Ms. Biery expressed support for an Antelope Valley/Palmdale alignment.

Patrick Moore, Sierra Club

Mr. Moore expressed the benefit of high-speed rail from an environmental, economic, and societal point of view. Mr. Moore thanked the Authority for agreeing to further study of the Northern Mountain Crossing. Mr. Moore expressed the concern that the commuter ridership estimates into the Bay Area are too low.

Heidi West, CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation

Ms. West was speaking on the behalf of Rick Rayburn who was called away. Ms. West expressed gratitude for the ability to participate in the planning process with Staff, the Board and FRA. Ms. West expressed several concerns remaining regarding the Final EIR/EIS document. The concerns included: potential impacts to five state parks where high-speed rail would travel within 900 feet; impacts to wildlife corridors and open lands; and potential impacts from a Northern Mountain Crossing alignment. Ms. West expressed concern over non-identified impacts to parks more than 900 ft. from the proposed HST alignment, but still in close proximity to the high-speed train. Ms. West expressed concern over for the deletion and substitution of a paragraph in section 3.17 of the *Errata for the Final Program EIR/EIS*. Ms West noted that an acquisition of land is not necessarily a full mitigation strategy in regards to California State Parks.

Traci Verardo, CA State Parks Foundation

Ms. Verardo appreciates working with the Authority on issues regarding California Parks and Recreational Areas. Ms. Verardo expressed concern that a further study of a Northern Mountain Crossing might lead to impacts on Henry Coe State Park.

First day of the meeting ended at 3:40 pm.

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The second day of the meeting of the California High-Speed Rail Authority commenced on November 2nd at 9:05 p.m. at Sacramento Capitol Building, Senate Hearing Room 2040.

Members Present: Fran Florez, Chair
Marc Adelman, Vice Chair
Rod Diridon, Sr.
Lynn Schenk
T.J. Stapleton
Donna Andrews

Opening Comments

Chair Florez reported that there are several important items on the agenda. Chair Florez announced that an opportunity for public comment will be available on each agenda item. Chair Florez reported that anyone planning to speak needs to submit a form with the agenda item and their name. Chair Florez reported Mr. Underwood was unable to speak at yesterday's session and will make a comment before the Board takes up today's agenda items.

Public Comment

David Underwood, Transportation Involves Everyone

Mr. Underwood expressed concern that the Altamont Pass is not in consideration as a possible alignment in the Final EIR/EIS. Mr. Underwood commented that he is unable to find any studies showing commuter traffic within the Stockton, Modesto and Manteca region. Mr. Underwood expressed the desire for a station in Modesto because of a larger population than the Los Banos area.

Summary and Response to Comment Received on Final EIR/EIS

Executive Director Morshed reported that the high-speed rail project began over ten years ago. Executive Director Morshed reported that at the beginning of the project there was little known about how to develop a high-speed train system in California. Over the last ten years, the Authority along with high-speed rail experts, consultants, and the Federal Railroad Administration have worked hard to bring the project to this point. The preparation of the Final Program EIR/EIS is a huge step for California High-Speed Rail.

Deputy Dan Leavitt provided a supplement to the Staff Summary which provides staff summary and brief responses to the written and oral comments received on the Final Program EIR/EIS. Mr. Leavitt reported that the public comment received at this November Board meeting has been reviewed and the statements have been adequately addressed in previous responses and in the Staff Report. The Staff Report for the Final Program EIR/EIS is available on the Authority's website at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Consideration of Final Program EIR/EIS

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul gave an overview of the proposed resolution and proposed findings concerning the Final Program EIR/EIS and approval of an HST system. Chair Florez presented *Resolution 05-01 (Final Program EIR/EIS), California Environmental Quality Act Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the California High-Speed Train System, Errata for the Final Program EIR/EIS, and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Plan* for adoption. Member Schenk moved to adopt the resolution, Member Andrews seconded, which carried 6-0. *Resolution 05-01, CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the California High-Speed Train System, Errata for the Final Program EIR/EIS, and Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Plan* are available on the Authority's website at www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

Delegation of Authority to Executive Director

Deputy Attorney General Sproul gave an overview of the delegation of authority for the preparation of the Administrative Record for the Program EIR/EIS to the Executive Director. Chair Florez presented the delegation of authority for approval, Member Diridon moved to approve the delegation of authority, Member Stapleton seconded, which carried 6-0.

January 25th Meeting

Executive Director Morshed reported that there was a request for the January 25, 2006 Authority Meeting to be held in San Jose. Chair Florez presented the location for approval, Member Andrews moved to approve the location, Member Diridon seconded, which carried 6-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.